

upon completion of her term, devoted the rest of her time with us to consulting for various religious congregations.

Sister Barbara dedicated her entire life to serving others. She used the power of her beliefs and commitment to instill hope and inspiration in all who knew her.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to honor the life and contributions of Sister Barbara Suessman.

RECOGNIZING JAMES EDWARD
LEACH FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize James Leach, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

James has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years James has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam, Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending James Leach for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRESS MUST CO-SIGN ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today introducing a bill to require focused, careful consideration and separate Congressional approval of a form of back-door spending that could leave the taxpayers exposed to serious financial liability.

It is cosponsored by our colleagues Mr. WALZ, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MALONEY, Ms. BACHMANN, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. KLINE, Ms. MUSGRAVE and Mr. MILLER of Florida. I greatly appreciate their assistance and support.

The bill, entitled the "Congress Must Co-Sign Act" deals with proposals to have the Department of Transportation lend a billion dollars—or more—for any one purpose.

It would require greater transparency regarding such loans and a separate Congressional vote to approve each such loan, even if it had received preliminary approval either on its own or as part of a larger measure.

The purpose is to increase Congressional accountability and to reduce the chance the taxpayers will find themselves stuck with the bill if the lender should default on one of these loans.

The bill would require the Secretary of Transportation to provide Congress advance written notice at least 60 days before any De-

partment of Transportation funds can be used to make a loan in an amount greater than \$1 billion. This notice would have to include information about the purpose, the authority and the terms and conditions of the loan.

And the bill would require that after receiving the notice, Congress would have to pass legislation approving the loan before the Transportation Department could go forward and lend the money.

This is not just a theoretical matter—one such mega-loan is now being processed within the Administration. And that fact illustrates the need to broaden the focus in the debate about "earmarks" and special tax breaks. We in Congress need to take a harder look not just at direct spending and the indirect spending through the tax code, but also at backdoor spending through the lending of taxpayer dollars.

In all these areas, there is a need for greater transparency and accountability. That's why I have introduced H.R. 595, the "Stimulating Leadership in Controlling Expenditures"—or "SLICE"—Act, to enact a constitutionally sound version of a line-item veto for individual spending items.

It's also why I have introduced H.R. 905, the Commission on Unfair Tax Breaks and Subsidies—or "CUTS"—Act, which would provide another way to require action to increase equity and accountability in the federal budget.

And that is why I am introducing this bill today—not because I am convinced that the pending loan, or some similar loans in the future, would not be appropriate, but because I think it's essential that a decision to approve such a mega-loan should be made in a careful, deliberate way with full discussion of the merits and potential risks and a separate vote here in the Congress. At the end of the day, I might vote to approve the pending loan or some other loan of that type, or I might conclude that the potential costs outweigh the likely benefits. My purpose is not to prejudge the result, but to require a better, more open way of making a decision.

The federal budget remains awash in a sea of red ink and we are continuing to add to the Nation's towering pile of debt. People in Colorado and across the country expect greater transparency and accountability from their elected officials and our decisions on spending. This bill would take an important step in that direction and I think it deserves the support of all our colleagues.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE
HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF GEORGIA

SPEECH OF

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I mourn the loss of my friend and colleague, Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD. CHARLIE was a tenacious fighter in Congress who would not back down from his beliefs. More important than his work in the House of Representatives, he was a dedicated husband, loving father of two sons and a grandfather of four.

CHARLIE served his country proudly in Vietnam and was a decorated veteran. Upon his return to the states, he practiced dentistry and helped countless Georgians. In 1994, he brought his compassion and conservative values to Washington. I soon learned that CHARLIE NORWOOD was a man of impressive character and conviction, with a Southern charm and heart of gold.

CHARLIE NORWOOD was a fervent believer in tackling the problem of illegal immigration, and I enjoyed working with him to pass immigration reform. CHARLIE made a valuable contribution to the House's immigration bill in the 109th Congress by including parts of his CLEAR Act in the legislation. I shared his belief that we should direct local law enforcement to help us apprehend the illegal immigrants in this country who are criminals.

CHARLIE courageously battled cancer for a number of years, and he was an inspiration to many, including his colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I am pleased that I had the opportunity to work with CHARLIE, and my wife Cheryl and I extend our deepest sympathies to Gloria Norwood and their entire family.

RECOGNIZING RYAN DANIEL HARRIS
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK
OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ryan Harris, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ryan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Ryan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ryan Harris for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCING THE IRAQ
CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, this week the House has considered a resolution focused on the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq by committing more troops. That certainly deserves the debate it has received.

I voted for the resolution disapproving of the escalation plan because I think that plan is misguided and will not be effective in the context of the civil war that has emerged in Iraq.

Of course, I'm not under any illusion that the president will listen to the resolution's message. He has made clear his intention to move

forward, and many troops are already in place or heading to their new positions.

I think that is a tragic error, one that I will work to correct. But at the same time we—both the Administration and the Congress—must consider what may come next.

That is why I am today introducing legislation to require that Congress be informed about the extent to which the Administration is doing the planning that is needed if we are to be prepared to respond to what our intelligence agencies tell us may be further catastrophic developments in Iraq and the region.

You'd think it wouldn't be necessary for Congress to legislate to make sure the Pentagon plans for contingencies. And when, at a recent Armed Services Committee hearing, I asked Secretary Gates whether they were doing that, his answer, while vague, was reassuring.

But vague reassurances aren't enough, and I am following up with this bill because I don't want a repeat of the performance that led the Administration to launch a war in Iraq without a plan for what would come after initial military success.

The Bush Administration was warned—by the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon's Joint Staff, the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the CIA's National Intelligence Council, among others—that U.S. troops could face significant postwar resistance.

And in February, 2003 an Army War College report warned that without an "overwhelming" effort to prepare for the U.S. occupation of Iraq, "The United States may find itself in a radically different world over the next few years, a world in which the threat of Saddam Hussein seems like a pale shadow of new problems of America's own making."

But despite these warnings, the Bush Administration rushed ahead without a comprehensive plan in place to secure and rebuild the country once our military had achieved its initial objectives.

We all know where that has led us—to the point where, according to the just-released National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq, we're faced with a deteriorating situation in Iraq in which "Iraqi society's growing polarization, the persistent weakness of the security forces and the state in general, and all sides' ready recourse to violence are collectively driving an increase in communal and insurgent violence and political extremism."

And now we are being warned that things well may get even worse.

Specifically, the NIE states that as Iraq's security environment worsens, three prospective security paths could emerge—chaos leading to partition, the emergency of a Shia strongman, or anarchic fragmentation of power.

Madam Speaker, the NIE is the Administration's own document, and the most authoritative written judgment of the Director of National Intelligence with respect to Iraq. I think it must be taken seriously, and I think we in Congress must demand to be told—specifically and in detail—just how the Administration is preparing to respond should any one of those contingencies occur.

That is what my legislation calls for. It would require that by June 30th of this year the Administration inform the House and Senate Armed Services Committees just how the Department of Defense and other agencies

would respond to each of the three scenarios identified by the NIE, with an explanation of the proposed role of U.S. troops under each scenario, including a comprehensive analysis identifying and justifying the number of U.S. troops needed in each case.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I want assurances that this Administration is thinking about and planning for troubling possibilities they themselves have depicted. No one wants chaos or increased violence in Iraq, but it would be irresponsible not to plan for those possibilities. While looking at Iraq through rose-colored glasses may make us feel better, we will only do right by our men and women in uniform if we plan for likely contingencies, however unpalatable.

Of course, this legislation isn't intended to solve the larger problem of Iraq. To do that, we need a policy aimed at escalating diplomatic and political efforts and lightening the U.S. footprint in Iraq. But so far the President instead is continuing to embrace the idea that the solution is more troop.

Defense Secretary Gates has said that we'll know within months whether or not that escalation has been successful. So it isn't too soon to begin planning now for what may come next. And it is high time for Congress to insist that the Administration is responding to that essential.

TRIBUTE TO DAN E. STRAIGHT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of Dan E. Straight. Although Mr. Straight did not reside in my district, he worked on an issue within my district that was dear to his heart—the preservation and reopening of the Rollins Pass road over the Continental Divide near Winter Park, Colorado.

Mr. Straight passed away last week. He led a full life that included patriotic service to our country. He served in the U.S. Air Force for years and saw action in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He also served his community through work with the Boy Scouts, the American Red Cross and his local Rotary.

And because he loved history and the outdoors, he was a champion for the reopening of the Rollins Pass road. Also known as the Moffat Road due to its proximity to the Moffat railroad tunnel, this road was used as a stage and narrow gauge railroad corridor taking passengers from Colorado's east slope communities to the homesteads, resources and recreational activities on the western slope. Rollins Pass contains historic railroad features such as dramatic trestles that span creek valleys and a feature aptly called the Needle Eye Tunnel near the top. Due to age, rock fall has occurred in the tunnel and it has remained closed.

Due to Mr. Straight's efforts, I included language in the James Peak Wilderness and Protection Area Act to allow for the reopening of the Rollins Pass road to two-wheel drive vehicles. Conversations are occurring between the acted countries and the U.S. Forest Service in this regard. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Straight as we were working on this legisla-

tion. It was clear that he had a love for this road, this state and this country and he served it all with distinction and passion.

Madam Speaker, I have attached a story from the Longmont Times-Call newspaper noting his passing.

[From the Daily Times—Call, Feb. 9, 2007]

LONGMONT LOSES 'THE COLONEL'

(By Trevor Hughes)

LONGMONT.—Dan E. Straight, a retired Air Force colonel and tireless advocate of reopening Rollins Pass Road over the Continental Divide to Winter Park, died suddenly Wednesday. He was 84.

A longtime local resident, Straight volunteered with groups ranging from the American Red Cross to the Boy Scouts. He helped launch the Twin Peaks Rotary.

Originally from Greeley, Straight and his family settled in Longmont around 1976 after he retired from the Air Force, for which he had flown more than 29 types of aircraft. The front fuselage of one of them, a B-26B Marauder nicknamed "Flack Bait," is displayed at the Smithsonian.

Straight, known locally to many as "The Colonel," was one of many pilots of the storied World War II bomber. He flew one mission in the bomber, on Valentine's Day 1945, carrying his young daughter's shoe in his pocket so she'd always be near.

Straight often regaled high school students with stories from his service during World War II, Korea and Vietnam, according to his family.

He and Juanita also were Red Cross volunteers who helped Special Transit transport people in Longmont and Boulder County to medical appointments.

But it was perhaps his 25-year presidency of the Rollins Pass Restoration Association that brought Straight the most local attention. The pass, along an old railroad grade and through the Needle's Eye Tunnel, offers a shortcut between Boulder and Grand counties.

The 23-mile route fell out of use by trains in 1928, when the 6.2-mile Moffat Tunnel was completed. With the tracks removed in the late 1920s, trains gave way to cars, and for decades the pass and tunnel drew sightseers and travelers from across the Front Range.

Part of the Needle's Eye Tunnel collapsed in 1979, but it was re-opened to cars in 1987 before another partial collapse that injured a sightseer closed it again in 1990.

"I'm just amazed at the people who built it," Straight said in 2003.

Technically difficult to pull off at 11,000 feet, the tunnel-stabilization project entailed drilling eight-foot holes into the tunnel walls and roof, then gluing in inch-thick steel rods.

The 1990 collapse injured an area firefighter who was hit by falling rocks from the roof of the tunnel's southern entrance.

The cause: a single missing rock bolt. Ironically, the space where the missing bolt should be is clearly visible in the commemorative photos given to association members. Straight took that photo, a signed copy of which hangs in the Times-Call newsroom.

Despite the setback, Straight remained committed to reopening the tunnel, and negotiations among local officials about fixing it continue to this day.

"That was his favorite mission in life," said his daughter Su Eckhardt.

She added that Straight was involved in many other endeavors, including the Longmont Rotary Club, Westview Presbyterian Church, the Masons, the Shriners, the St. Vrain Photographic Society and the Salvation Army.

"He made a commitment beyond simply joining and paying dues," she said.